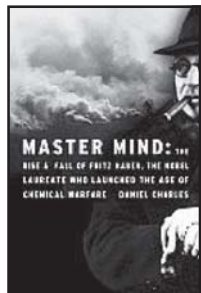

Book Reviews—



By Mr. Reid Kirby



Mastermind: The Rise and Fall of Fritz Haber, the Nobel Laureate Who Launched the Age of Chemical Warfare, Daniel Charles, Harper Collins, 2005.

Fritz Haber is the father of modern chemical warfare. Like so many of his day, his patriotism was a defining aspect of his character. With dedication, he applied scientific methods to the advancement of Germany in all matters, which rendered him a controversial personality in history.

It would be a serious mistake to dismiss Fritz Haber because of the role he played in German chemical warfare. He was a friend and an intellectual peer of Albert Einstein and was presented the Nobel Prize in 1918. His process of fixating nitrogen from the air and using iron catalysis was instrumental in fertilizer production to support the food supply for more than two billion people and in the production of war explosives.

Daniel Charles's tragic history of this imposing figure in chemistry is easy to read and well balanced. Mr. Haber's Jewish faith forced him to leave Germany when Hitler and the Nazi regime assumed power. The difficulties in reconciling Haber's efforts in chemical warfare during World War I has either erased Fritz Haber from history or reconstructed him as something incomplete.



Poisons: From Hemlock to Botox and the Killer Bean of Calabar, Peter Macinnis, Arcade Publishing, 2004.

This book is recommended for literary buffs. The author starts his book by disputing the accuracy of *Lives of Great Poisoners* (a play by Caryl Churchill), as referenced in *Under Milk Wood* (a play by Dylan Thomas). Through literature, history, and criminal cases, Mr. Macinnis reveals the central theme—the roles that poisons play in civilization. His chemical warfare knowledge is naive at best, but the accounts of crimes involving poisons, the histories of specific poisons, and the efforts required to defrock poisoners has a unique cultural heritage that the Chemical Soldier will appreciate.

Mr. Kirby is a project manager for Strategic Staffing Solutions (S3). He holds a bachelor's degree in valuation science from Lindenwood College, with a minor in biology and special studies in behavioral toxicology and biotechnology.

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